



Katharine Hepburn and Henry Fonda, performing together for the first time in their long acting careers, are shown in August of 1980 as they approach Sam Murdough's "Market" [for the day it was converted from a marina] in Thayer II, later wrecked off the north end of Kimball Island. This boat and Squam Lake's special loon population are central to the theme of Ernest Thompson's *ON GOLDEN POND*, now a film, previewed last Thursday in Concord and opening in this area February 12.

[Photo by Tink Taylor]

'On Golden Pond' well received at New England Premiere

By TINK TAYLOR

Ernest Thompson's nostalgic novel of an aging couple spending what might be their last summer at their camp on a remote pond in Maine, was made into a film during the summer of 1980. Its backdrop was Squam Lake with a few sneak views of Win-nipесаukее.

Starring together for the first time in their long acting careers were Katharine Hepburn and Henry Fonda. Henry's screen daughter, Chelsea, is also his real daughter; Jane, whose film company, Marble Arch, made the film which has since received mixed reviews, but mostly favorable. There are five others in the Mark Rydel directed production; Jane's fiancé, his son, a crusty mailboat operator and two dock hands.

Last Thursday evening at Cinema 93 in Concord, Governor Gallen hosted a gathering of selected guests, dignitaries, Squam Lake residents and some local folks who helped make the film. They all got to preview, three weeks before its scheduled release, *ON GOLDEN POND*. A gala reception and champagne toast followed at B. Mae Denny's in Concord.

It was the N.H. Film and Television Bureau an agency of state government, which was responsible for getting the *ON GOLDEN POND* Company to New Hampshire. The result was an estimated \$1.2 million payroll much of the money staying in the Lakes Region.

The film was well received in New Hampshire, especially when the credits rolled and a special thanks to the people of New Hampshire flashed on the screen. Cheers went up!

Interspersed with numerous scenes of Squam Lake's natural beauty, including close-up shots of the Common Loon (not so common in recent years), the story portrays

in a sensitive way the problems of an aging couple faced with their twilight years, and a daughter who has never really pleased her father.

The appearance of Jane (Chelsea), who leaves her (to be) step son in the care of her parents for the summer, changes everyone's lives, young and old alike.

After a very rough start, Henry and the boy get on. It's fishing which brings them together, and the search for Walter, a huge trout, (himself a senior citizen of Golden Pond!) which lends real purpose to the frequent fishing expeditions (They eventually catch Walter but let him go for whatever the symbolism is in that.)

Local assistants who recall standing for hours on the Squam River Bridge in Holderness that August afternoon 18 months ago will be taken aback by how little footage there is of Sam Murdough's "Market". But then, that's how things are done in the motion picture industry.

The much extolled boat crash scene, filmed off the north end of Kimball Island, might be a disappointment to those film buffs nurtured on the bomb-bastic and explosive likes of James Bond. Instead of disintegrating under impact after hitting a rock, the Thayer II, an old but classic wooden hulled speedboat used by Henry and the boy, loses its right side bow. It sinks in 'Purgatory Cove' all the same and the pair must be rescued. Squam Lakers especially familiar with the lake will notice a few more rocks protruding from the water than are usually there, and a beaver lodge as well. But then, that's how films are made!

Despite its clichés, *ON GOLDEN POND* is a story which should be near and dear to the hearts of many. Henry Fonda as the irascible 80 year old retired professor; Katharine Hepburn as the understanding and tolerant wife; Jane Fonda as the daughter who wasn't able to be a son plus a

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solid supporting cast make it all come together making for good family fare save a little overdoing of the heavy language. Even the mail man has just about mastered a Mainiac accent!

To tell anymore is to spoil ON GOLDEN POND for those who have not yet seen it!

Area theaters, including Plymouth's Cinemas, will be screening ON GOLDEN POND starting February 12.